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Research Article

An Investigation of Dark Jokes Translation Strategies in Persian Subtitled Versions of *Joker* Movie

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Humor does travel cross-linguistic and cultural barriers. Humor is a crucial aspect of mass entertainment and intercultural communication. The translation of humor is also a challenging task for translators as they should have sufficient knowledge of the source and target languages to comprehend the context of the situation. Regardless of the growing interest in Audiovisual Translation, subtitling humor, particularly dark jokes, in movies remains on the periphery of translation studies. This study aimed to determine the strategies used by Iranian translators in subtitling dark jokes in movies based on Molina and Albir's (2008) model.
Methodology: The corpus of the study consisted of a crime and drama film entitled *Joker* (2019) movie. In the selected movie, 24 dark jokes were identified. To achieve the study objective, two Persian-subtitled versions of the *Joker* movie were analyzed. The obtained data were described using descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency, percentage) and the Chi-Square test. The obtained results indicated that Amplification, Literal Translation, and Modulation were the most frequently applied strategies in subtitling jokes.
Results: A chi-square test of independence showed that Iranian translators had different strategies in the subtitling of dark jack. Of different employed strategies, the literal translation was the first commonly used strategy.
Conclusion: The research findings can enhance translation students, subtitlers, and fansubbers' understanding of the subtitling strategies being adopted by translators in subtitling dark jokes in movies.

1. Introduction

The rapid growth in technology has given a unique chance for advanced developments in media. Broadcasting audiovisual programs in different languages through mass media has increased the importance of translating audiovisual texts into other languages for people of different nations. The importance of media and the demand for audiovisual translation (AVT) has led to the academic study of this special branch of translation (Cintas & Anderman, 2008). The audiovisual translation was discussed by some translation scholars, such as Delabastita (1989), Diaz Cintas and Remael (2007), and Gottlieb (1997). Many definitions have been given to explain AVT, such as Ghaemi and Benyamin, (2015, p. 40), who claimed that "audiovisual language transfer denotes the process by which a film or television program is made comprehensible to a target audience that is unfamiliar with the original's source language". Diaz-Cintas (2009, p. 6) considers "AVT as a powerful activity, which is a significant form of intercultural communication".

Audiovisual translation, as a new branch in translation studies, has been subcategorized into subtitle and dubbing (Chiaro et al., 2008). Gambier (2009) defined the categories of free commentary, sight translation, consecutive interpreting, subtitling, intralingual subtitling, dubbing, voice-over or half-dubbing, interlingual subtitling, bilingual subtitling, real-time subtitling, simultaneous interpreting, and audio description for AVT studies.

Baker (2001) asserted that subtitles are referred to as textual versions of film dialogue, which appear either left-aligned or centered on the bottom of the screen. Subtitling is transferring the verbal messages of a movie into a written text in the form of one or two lines at the bottom of

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the screen in sync with the source verbal message (Agulló & Matamala, 2019; Gottlieb, 2004; Pedersen, 2017). According to Gottlieb (1997), the two main types of subtitling are intralingual subtitling and interlingual subtitling. The original film dialogs are translated from the source language to the target language (TL) using interlingual subtitling. Intralingual subtitling is within the same language but for deaf or hard-of-hearing television audiences. According to Chiaro et al. (2008), the advantage of subtitles is that the viewers cannot miss the soundtrack and visual image of the movie. Subtitles help the audiences to read and comprehend what has been said by the characters of the movie in a different language (Szarkowska et al., 2021). In addition, subtitling is considerably cheaper, and the production takes less time and energy. An appropriate subtitle consists of one or two lines with nearly 32 to 39 characters in each line (Chiaro et al., 2008; Doherty & Kruger, 2018). In this way, the quality of given subtitling must be examined by evaluating the stylistic and semantic values of each verbal section of a film. As a result, Gottlieb (1992) has developed ten subtitling film translation strategies, including dislocation, paraphrase, deletion, imitation, transcription, expansion, condensation, decimation, transfer, and resignation.

Humor is a crucial aspect of intercultural communication and essential to movies and literary works. Humor can be described as a linguistic, semiotic, cognitive, and social phenomenon that makes a person laugh (Dore, 2020; Ross, 1998). Husein Azeez and Azeez Turki (2019) believe that the significant purpose of humor is to get audiences to laugh by using puns, satire, jokes, irony, and exaggeration. Spanakaki (2007) suggests that everything that seems funny is considered humor, even if it might not always be perceived or interpreted as such. Ross (1998, p. 1) has stated that “things can be funny without laughter and in other cases, laughter is a sign of fear or embarrassment and has nothing to do with humor.” Raphaelson-West (1989) has divided humor into universal, cultural, and linguistic. Schmitz (2002) has also categorized humor into language-based humor, universal humor, and culture-based humor. Another classification defined by Delabastita (1989) includes language, irony, joke, parody, and pun. In this regard, Raphaelson-West (1989) has put jokes into three primary groups, including linguistic jokes, cultural jokes, and universal jokes. Raphaelson-West (1989) then said that global jokes are the easiest aspect of humor translation. In addition, Zabalbeascoa (1996) classifies jokes into international, national-culture-institutions, national-sense-of-humor, language-dependent, visual, and complex jokes. In this regard, black humor, also known as a dark joke, is driven by a French word, *Humour noir*. Black humor or dark joke is noticeable because it is used in dark, satirical, or bizarrely comic episodes that ridicule man (Ningsih, 2010). Dark jokes show the uselessness of seeking easy and well-ordered responses to the disasters of natural human life. The lines between tragedy and comedy constantly change in this type of humor. Audiences laugh since they cannot understand how to show their reactions (Ningsih, 2010). The laughter is evidence of the audience’s reflection in revealing that they could laugh despite the chaos, confusion, and death (Ningsih, 2010). In the present study, dark jokes show selfishness, paradox, injustice, and absurdity. Thus, the humor that includes these items is recognized as a dark joke.

It is said that humor, and more specifically, dark jokes do not acquire well. This approach seems to have inspired many scholars to research the (un)translatability of humor. According to Spanakaki (2007), humor has hardly been studied as a specific problem in translation. In other words, translating humor is difficult as the translators should have background knowledge from source text (ST) and text (TT). According to Husein Azeez and Azeez Turki (2019), the translator receives the humorous effect of the humor and transfers it to another language. Besides, the translators must comprehend the context of the situation and produce humorous elements. Nevertheless, humor does travel cross-linguistic and cultural barriers. Translators should adopt various strategies to transfer the original messages of the jokes in subtitling the movies. In Iran, some studios, such as Tiny Movie Website, Glory Entertainment, KingMovie Website, and Diba Movie Website, subtitle comedy movies. However, limited studies have been conducted to identify the translation strategies translators utilize for subtitling humors in these movies, especially dark jokes.

Consequently, there is not much scientific study in this specific realm to determine the strategies being adopted by translators in each specific form of humor. In particular, not much has been published on the specific subject of jokes regarding audiovisual texts. Indeed, if compared to other areas of study in AVT, humor and more specifically, dark jokes do not seem to be an extensive area of research in the movie genre. In this regard, to overcome these problems, translators have to adopt different strategies in subtitling to convey the messages of the original humor and specifically dark jokes. Therefore, this study investigated the most frequent strategies used by Iranian translators in subtitling the English dark jokes of *“Joker”* movie based on Molina and Albir’s (2002) model and sought to see if there was any significant difference between the strategies used by Iranian translators for subtitling the dark jokes in the selected movie.

2. Methodology

2.1. Corpus of the study

This study intended to identify the strategies adopted by Iranian translators in subtitling dark jokes in an American psychological movie. Regarding the specific purpose of the current research, the corpus of this research consisted of one crime and drama movie entitled *Joker* (2019). It was an English movie that was released in 2019, in the United States. Its running time is about 2 hours and 2 minutes. This American psychological movie was directed and produced by Todd Phillips, who co-wrote the screenplay with Scott Silver (batman.fandom.com). The production

company was Warner Bros. Pictures. The movie earned 11 nominations at the 92nd Academy Awards. To identify the dark jokes correctly in the *Joker* (2019) movie, a sample of 24 dark jokes was selected from the website Ranker, where more than 14,000 fans identified and ranked the dark jokes in *Joker*'s (2019) movie (Ranker, 2021).

In this research, two Persian subtitles for the *Joker* movie were selected among the other 40 subtitles. Male translators, including Reza Marandiyan and Arian Tahmasb, translated the two Persian subtitled visions. These two subtitles have not gone beyond the main concept of the film, compared to other subtitles. In selecting the subtitles, the fluency of the text was considered in terms of the Persian language. In addition, it was made sure that all parts of the original text were translated.

2.2. Theoretical model

Molina and Albir (2002) proposed a model of analysis for identifying and classifying translation strategies that can be applied to various units of language, such as words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. They indicated that there were 18 translation strategies used in the translation. Their model is more precise and detailed than other translation experts' models in the field, and the strategies are appropriate to the necessities of the translators when adopted in subtitling. The classification of Molina and Albir's (2002) model applied in the present study, was as follows:

- Linguistic compression: The translator combines the linguistic items within TT.
- Linguistic amplification: The translator does not use a phrase with the exact number of words in ST.
- Calque: It is a literal lexical or structural translation of a source language word or phrase.
- Generalization: It means that the translator uses a general or neutral word or term in TT.
- Particularization: The translator uses a precise and concrete word or term in translation.
- Literal translation: It is a translation of word by word, whether it is in the structure of form or meaning of the word.
- Compensation: This strategy is applied by translators to introduce an ST element of information or stylistic effect in another place in the TT because it cannot be reflected in the same place as in the ST.
- Borrowing: To borrow a phrase or word from the source language by naturalizing the spelling rules in the target text.
- Amplification: It means to add detailed information which was not expressed in ST by paraphrasing and exploiting details.
- Reduction: This strategy is in opposition to amplification. It is used to reduce the detailed ST items in the target text.
- Adaptation: The replacement of the ST's cultural environment with a different cultural element in TL.
- Established equivalent: This corresponds to the literal translation by finding a term defined by TL dictionaries as an equivalent.
- Description: This strategy is applied to replace a term or expression with a description of its form or/and function.
- Discursive creation: To use equivalences in target text which looks unpredictable out of context.
- Modulation: To change the author's point of view and alter what was exactly said by the author.
- Substitution (linguistic, paralinguistic): It means changing paralinguistic items to linguistic items or vice versa.
- Transposition: In this strategy, the translator changes the grammatical category.
- Variation: To variate the social or geographical dialect, gestures, textual intonation, and style.

2.3. Procedure

This study was an attempt to determine the translation strategies used for subtitling dark jokes in the selected animation based on Molina and Albir's (2002) model. To this end, the corpus of the study consisted of one crime/drama movie named *Joker* (2019). In the selected movie, 24 jokes were chosen for the analysis. To attain the objective of the current research, first, the movie was carefully and comprehensively watched. Second, the dark jokes were extracted from the movie script. In the third step, the two Persian subtitled versions of the movie were read and listened to word by word. Then, the researcher compared the source jokes with the Persian equivalent in Persian subtitled versions of the movie. In the next step, the translation strategies used by Iranian subtitlers for translating dark jokes were identified. The translation strategies used in the Persian subtitled versions of the movie were carefully analyzed based on Molina and Albir (2002) to determine the more frequently adopted strategies. Then, to answer the research questions, the strategies applied by Iranian translators in the Persian subtitled versions of the movie were analyzed based on 18 strategies introduced by Molina and Albir (2002). Afterward, *the data was put in SPSS*, version 24, and the descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency and percentages) and Chi-square test were calculated to determine the most and the least applied strategies for subtitling dark jokes in Persian.

3. Results

To determine the types of strategies applied by Iranian translators in subtitling the dark jokes in *Joker*'s (2019) movie based on Molina and Albir's (2002) model, descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency and percentage) were used. As Table 1 illustrates, the highly used strategies in Marandiyan's subtitle (Subtitle 1) were literary translation and linguistic amplification strategies with a frequency of 19 and 12 and percentages of (25%) and (15%), respectively. The results revealed that Marandiyan used

Table 1.

Percentages of Translation Strategies Used in Two Subtitled Versions of Joker Movie (2019)

	Translation strategies	Reza Marandiyan (Subtitle1)	Percentage	Arian Tahmasb (Subtitle2)	Percentage
1	Adaptation	2	2.5%	1	1%
2	Amplification	11	14%	5	7%
3	Borrowing	4	5%	5	7%
4	Calque	0	0%	0	0%
5	Compensation	0	0%	0	0%
6	Description	5	6%	0	0%
7	Discursive Creation	5	6%	3	4%
8	Establish Equivalent	0	0%	3	4%
9	Generalization	5	6%	4	5%
10	Linguistic Amplification	12	15%	8	11%
11	Linguistic Compression	1	1%	3	4%
12	Literal Translation	19	24%	32	42%
13	Modulation	10	13%	5	7%
14	Particularization	1	1%	1	1%
15	Reduction	2	2.5%	5	7%
16	Substitution	0	0%	0	0%
17	Transposition	1	1%	0	0%
18	Variation	0	0%	0	0%
Total		78	100%	75	100%

linguistic compression, transposition, and particularization strategies with the least frequency of 1 and percentages of (1%) when subtitling dark jokes. As shown in Table 1, established equivalent, calque, compensation, substitution, and variation strategies with a percentage of 0% were not used by the subtitler. Moreover, it can be noted that among the eighteen strategies proposed by Molina and Albir's (2002) model, literal translation, with a frequency of 32 and a percentage of (42%) was the most used strategy in Tahmasb's subtitle (Subtitle 2), while adaptation and particularization strategies with the frequency of 1 and percentages of (1%) were the least used ones. In addition, description, calque, compensation, transposition, substitution, and variation strategies were not used in Tahmasb's subtitle.

In the following sections, the researchers analyzed and compared an ST with its Persian subtitled versions, and some examples were provided.

Adaptation. This strategy is related to the cultural environment when the translator replaces ST cultural elements in TT that have the same meaning in the target culture. In this regard, three examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitled versions of the Joker (2019) movie. For instance, the "Adaptation" strategy was used two times in Marandiyan's subtitle. However, Tahmasb used the "Adaptation" strategy once (Table 2).

As indicated in Table 2, Marandiyan (Subtitle 1) has translated "stand-up" into "کارهای کمدین" (i.e., comedian works) and "big clubs" into "بترکونه" (i.e., explode) in the TT using a cultural equivalent from TL. In the second row, Tahmasb (Subtitle 2) has translated "Nobody's civil anymore" into "دیگه کسی از تمدن بویی نبُرده (i.e., No one is civilized anymore) in the Persian language. Thus, the subtitler has used an adaption strategy by finding a cultural equivalent in TL.

Amplification. It occurs when the translator introduces some information which is not expressed in the ST. In the two Persian subtitled versions of the Joker (2019) movie, 16 examples were extracted. For instance, the amplification strategy was used eleven times in Marandiyan's subtitle (Table 2). Nonetheless, Tahmasb has used the amplification strategy five times.

As can be seen in Table 2, Marandiyan has adapted the amplification strategy for translating "Murray, one small thing?" into "موری یه درخواست کوچولو ازت دارم" by adding some words (i.e., Murry, I have a small request for you). In the third example, Tahmasb has translated "When you bring me out" into "وقتی دعوتم می‌کنی روی صحنه" (i.e., When you invite me on stage). It seems that the translators have preferred to aid the audiences in better understanding the ST message by adding some words in TT.

Borrowing. This strategy is used when translators borrow a phrase or word from an ST to target text without any change (Molina & Albir, 2002). Thus, in the two Persian subtitled versions of the Joker (2019) movie, nine examples were extracted. For example, the registered number of the borrowing strategy in Marandiyan's subtitle is four cases (Table 2). However, Tahmasb has used the "Borrowing" strategy five times.

In the above examples, the subtitlers have applied the borrowing strategy for translating dark jokes. Although the subtitlers could find different equivalents for the ST words, such as "tragedy", "comedy", "stand-up", and "mask" in the target language, they transferred them without any change as "تراژدی", "کمدی", "استند اپ" and "ماسک" into the Persian language.

Description. Based on this strategy, a description in a second language is replaced with a term or expression in TL (Molina & Albir, 2002). In the present study, the description strategy was used five times in Marandiyan's subtitle (Table 2).

In the first and second examples, the subtitlers have applied the description strategy for translating the words "tragedy" and "comedy" into "یه داستان غم انگیزه" (i.e., a sad motivational story) and "طنز مسخرست" (i.e., the joke is ridiculous) in the Persian language, respectively. Thus, these words have been described by the subtitler.

Discursive Creation. In the two Persian subtitled versions of the Joker (2019) movie, eight examples were extracted. For example, the discursive creation strategy

was used five times in Marandiyan's subtitle. However, Tahmasb used the discursive creation strategy three times. Table 2 contains samples of the discursive creation strategy in the two Persian subtitled versions of Joker's (2019) movie.

In the first example, both translators have translated the term "more cent" into "با وقارتر" (i.e., gracious) and " با ارزش تر" (i.e., Priceless) that are temporary equivalence in the TL. In the second row, Marandiyan has translated "bothering" into "ادا و اصول درنیاری" (i.e., Do not play pranks) is no equivalent meaning for ST. Thus, the translator has utilized temporary equivalence in the TL. The last example is "scream" which has been translated into "بدرفتاری میکنن" (i.e., they are abusing others). In this regard, the subtitler has not chosen an established equivalent for the "scream".

Establish Equivalent. In the two Persian subtitled versions of the Joker (2019) movie, three examples were extracted. For example, the establish equivalent strategy was used three times in Marandiyan's subtitle, while Tahmasb did not use the establish equivalent strategy for subtitling the dark jokes (Table 2).

In the first and second examples, Marandiyan has applied the "Establish Equivalent" strategy for translating the words "civil" and "mask" into "تمدن" and "نقاب", respectively.

Generalization. The generalization strategy is used when translators replace a hyponym with a general term or word in TL. In the present study, nine examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitled versions of the *Joker* (2019) movie. For example, the number of generalization strategies in the subtitle of the *Joker* movie, which has been translated by Marandiyan, is five cases (Table 2). However, Tahmasb used the "Generalization" strategy four times.

It seems that in the first example, Marandiyan has replaced the words "you" with a generic equivalent, "آدم" (i.e., people) in the TT. In the second example, Tahmasb has replaced the word "Everybody" in the ST with "تمام مردم" (i.e., all people) in the TT, which is a more general term. In the third example, both translators have translated the term "sh*t" into "ارزش" (i.e., value) or "اهمیت" (i.e., importance), which are a more general equivalent in the TL.

Linguistic Amplification. In this study, 20 examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitled versions of the *Joker* (2019) movie. For example, the linguistic amplification strategy was used twelve times in Marandiyan's subtitle. In the same vein, Tahmasb used the linguistic amplification strategy eight times. Table 2 reveals samples of the linguistic amplification strategy in the two Persian subtitled versions of Joker's (2019) movie.

The above examples are included in the linguistic amplification strategy because some linguistic elements were added to the TT. For instance, in the first example, both two subtitlers have added the word "برنامه" (i.e., program) in their translations that were not in the source text. Besides, in the second example, the words " حس میکنم یا واقعا" (i.e., I feel it or it really…) were added to the target text.

Linguistic Compression. In the present study, four examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitled versions of the *Joker* (2019) movie. In this regard, Marandiyan has used the linguistic compression strategy for once. In addition, this strategy was used three times in Tahmasb's subtitle. The examples of using the linguistic compression strategy are shown in Table 2.

For instance, in the first example, "a little boy" is subtitled into "بچه" (i.e., kid) in the TT. It seems that Tahmasb has synthesized some words from ST to TT. In the second example, the subtitlers have synthesized some linguistic elements in TT.

Literal Translation. In the literal translation strategy, the translator translates word for word. In this regard, 51 examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitles of *Joker* (2019). The number of literal translation strategies used by Marandiyan in the subtitle of the *Joker* movie was 19 cases. This strategy was used 32 times in Tahmasb's subtitle (Table 2).

As Table 2 illustrates, Tahmasb has applied the literal translation strategy for translating the sentence "and people are starting to notice" into "مردم شروع کردن تا متوجه شن" (i.e., and People are starting to realize) in TT. Hence, the strategy used for the above-mentioned sentences was a literal translation.

Modulation. The modulation strategy occurs when the translator alters the author's viewpoint. In this strategy, the subject or structure of the sentence is omitted or changed. In the present study, 15 examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitled versions of the *Joker* (2019) movie. For instance, this strategy was used 10 times in Marandiyan's subtitle. Besides, Tahmasb has used the modulation strategy five times (Table 2).

In the first example, Marandiyan has subtitled the sentence "Have you seen what it's like out there, Murray" as "اصلا از وضع جامعه خبر داری موری ؟" (i.e., Do you ever know what's the nature of society, Murry?) into Persian by changing the author's viewpoint. In the second example, "nice to me" is subtitled into "مسخره ام نکردی" (i.e., You don't make fun of me). In this sentence, Marandiyan has changed the negative sentence to the positive one.

Particularization. The particularization strategy means to move from a general concept into a more detailed or concrete term. In this regard, in one Persian subtitled version of the *Joker* (2019) movie, two examples were extracted. All examples of using the particularization strategy by Marandiyan are shown in Table 2.

In the first example, "out there" was particularized as "وضع جامعه" (i.e., the nature of society) in TT. In the next example, the general word "they" has been subtitled as "مقامات" in TT (i.e., officials) by using the particularization strategy.

Reduction. In the present study, seven examples were extracted from the two Persian subtitled versions of the *Joker* (2019) movie. For example, the reduction strategy was used two times in Marandiyan's subtitle. In addition, Tahmasb has used the reduction strategy five times for subtitling dark jokes (Table 2).

In the first example, the sentence "I mean" has been

Table 2.
Examples of Strategies in Two Subtitles of the Joker Movie

Strategy	Source Text	Reza Marandiyan (Subtitle 1)	Arian Tahmasb (Subtitle 2)
Adaptation			
	Everybody's telling me my stand-up is ready for the big clubs.	همه دارن بهم میگن که کارهای کمدین من قراره بترکونه	همه دارن بهم میگن اجراهام دست کلوب‌های بزرگ
	Nobody's civil anymore.	دیگه انسانیت از بین رفته	دیگه کسی از تمدن بویی نبُرده
Amplification			
	She told me I had a purpose: to bring laughter and joy to the world.	و بهم میگه که من به دنیا اومدم تا خنده و شادی به ارمغان بیارم	میگه من بدنیا اومدم تا خنده و شادی بیارم
	Murray, one small thing?	موری یه درخواست کوچولو ازت دارم	هی، موری.. .فقط یه چیز کوچولو
	When you bring me out,…	وقتی که میخوای منو بیاری…	وقتی دعوتم می‌کنی روی صحنه…
Borrowing			
	I used to think that my life was a tragedy, but now I realize it's a comedy.	من قبلاً فکر میکردم زندگیم شبیه یه داستان غم انگیزه اما حالا فهمیدم که یه طنز مسخرست	همیشه فکر می‌کردم زندگیم یه تراژدیه اما الان فهمیدم.. یه کمدی مسخرست.
	You know I do stand-up comedy.	میدونستی که من کارای کمدی و جوک گفتن میکنم	میدونی... من طنز استندآپ انجام میدم
	Someone who hides behind a mask.	کسی که خودشو پشت یه ماسک قایم میکنه	کسی که پشت نقاب پنهان شده
Description			
	I used to think that my life was a tragedy, but now I realize it's a comedy.	من قبلاً فکر میکردم زندگیم شبیه یه داستان غم انگیزه اما حالا فهمیدم که یه طنز مسخرست	همیشه فکر می‌کردم زندگیم یه تراژدیه اما الان فهمیدم.. یه کمدی مسخرست.
Discursive Creation			
	I hope my death makes more cents than my life.	فقط امیدوارم مرگی با وقارتر از،این زندگیم نصیبم بشه	فقط امیدوارم مرگم باارزش‌تر از زندگیم باشه
	Would you please stop bothering my kid?	میشه لطفا ادا و اصول درنیاری برا بچه ام ؟	میشه مزاحم بچه‌م نشی؟
	Everybody just yells and screams at each other	همه فقط سر هم داد میزنن ، با هم دیگه بدرفتاری میکنن	تمام مردم دارن سر همدیگه داد میزنن و جیغ می‌کشن
Establishing Equivalent			
	Someone who hides behind a mask.	کسی که خودشو پشت یه ماسک قایم میکنه	کسی که پشت نقاب پنهان شده
	Nobody's civil anymore.	دیگه انسانیت از بین رفته	دیگه کسی از تمدن بویی نبُرده
	The worst part of having a mental illness is people expect you to behave as if you don't.	دردناک تر از همه اینه که همه از یه فرد روانی میخوان که رو رفتارش کنترل داشته باشه	بدترین قسمت بیماری روانی داشتن اینه که مردم انتظار دارن طوری رفتار کنی انگار مریض نیستی
Generalization			
	I mean, don't you have to be funny to be a comedian?	خب میگم- مگه نباید آدم بامزه ای باشی تا بتونی در این شغل موفق باشی ؟	(..)آخه مگه نباید برای کمدین شدن بامزه باشی؟
	Everybody just yells and screams at each other	همه فقط سر هم داد میزنن ، با هم دیگه بدرفتاری میکنن	تمام مردم دارن سر همدیگه داد میزنن و جیغ می‌کشن
	They don't give a sh*t about people like you, Arthur.	مقامات هیچ ارزشی برای افرادی مثل تو قائل نیستند، آرتور	اون‌ها به آدم‌هایی مثل تو اهمیت نمیدن، آرتور
Linguistic Amplification			
	I've been watching you forever.	من همیشه برنامه هاتون رو دنبال میکنم	خیلی ساله که دارم برنامه ات را میبینم
	Is it just me, or is it getting crazier out there?	فقط من اینجوری حس میکنم یا واقعا اون بیرون وضع خراب تر شده ؟	فقط من اینطوری ام ... یا همه دارن دیوونه می شن
	The worst part of having a mental illness is people expect you to behave as if you don't.	دردناک تر از همه اینه که همه از یه فرد روانی میخوان که رو رفتارش کنترل داشته باشه	بدترین قسمت بیماری روانی داشتن اینه که مردم انتظار دارن طوری رفتار کنی انگار مریض نیستی
Linguistic Compression			
	When I was a little boy and told people I was going to be a comedian, everyone laughed at me.	چون وقتی که یه پسر بچه بودم و به مردم میگفتم که من در آینده قراره یه کمدین بشم همه بهم میخندیدن	بچه که بودم وقتی به مردم میگفتم میخوام کمدین بشم همه بهم میخندیدن
	My mother always tells me to smile and put on a happy face.	اون مدام بهم میگه که همیشه لبخند بزنم و خوشحال باشم	همیشه بهم میگه لبخند بزنم و شاد باشم
	They don't.	نه اهمیت نمی دهند	نه
Literal Translation			
	But I do, and people are starting to notice	ولی الان میدونم که دارم و حالا قراره مردم از وجودیت من مطلع بشن	ولی وجود دارم و مردم شروع کردن تا متوجه‌شن
	When you bring me out, can you introduce me as Joker?	وقتی که میخوای منو بیاری میشه منو جوکر معرفی کنی ؟	وقتی دعوتم می‌کنی روی صحنه. می‌تونی با عنوان "جوکر" معرفیم کنی؟
	Have you seen what it's like out there, Murray?	اصلا از وضع جامعه خبر داری موری ؟	تا حالا دیدی اون بیرون چه شکلیه، موری؟
Modulation			
	Have you seen what it's like out there, Murray?	اصلا از وضع جامعه خبر داری موری ؟	تا حالا دیدی اون بیرون چه شکلیه، موری؟
	You were the only one who was ever nice to me	تو تنها کسی بودی که هیچوقت مسخره ام نکردی	تو تنها کسی هستی که همیشه با من خوب رفتار کرده
Particularization			
	Have you seen what it's like out there, Murray.	اصلا از وضع جامعه خبر داری موری ؟	تا حالا دیدی اون بیرون چه شکلیه، موری؟
	They don't give a sh*t about people like you, Arthur.	مقامات هیچ ارزشی برای افرادی مثل تو قائل نیستند، آرتور	اون‌ها به آدم‌هایی مثل تو اهمیت نمیدن، آرتور
Reduction			
	I mean, don't you have to be funny to be a comedian?	خب میگم- مگه نباید آدم بامزه ای باشی تا بتونی در این شغل موفق باشی ؟	آخه مگه نباید برای کمدین شدن بامزه باشی؟ (..)
	She told me I had a purpose: to bring laughter and joy to the world.	و بهم میگه که من به دنیا اومدم تا خنده و شادی به ارمغان بیارم	میگه بدنیا اومدم تا شادی بیارم
	To be somebody but themselves?	……..	………
Transposition			
	…when you cross......a mentally ill loner with a society that abandons him and treats him like trash?	وقتی که یه فرد روان پریش رو تو جامعه ای تنهاش میزاری که مثل یه آشغال باهاش رفتار میکنن و طردش میکنن؟	وقتی سربه‌سر یه آدم منزوی و روانپریش میذاری که در جامعه‌ای زندگی می‌کنه که طردش کرده و مثل آشغال باهاش رفتار می‌کنه؟

Table 3.
Result of the Chi-square Test

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.321[a]	13	.087
Likelihood Ratio	24.021	13	.097
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.754	1	.031
N of Valid Cases	153		

omitted in Marandiyan's subtitle. In the second example, Tahmasb has subtitled "laughter and joy" to "شادی" (i.e., happiness) in the Persian language. Therefore, it seems that the reduction strategy was used to condense some words in TT. As shown in Table 2, both two subtitlers have not subtitled the sentence "To be somebody but themselves?" in the target text.

Transposition. In this strategy, the grammatical category is changed by the translator. In this regard, in the two Persian subtitled versions of the *Joker* (2019) movie, one example was extracted from Marandiyan's subtitle.

As can be seen in Table 2, the transposition strategy is used by Marandiyan to change the adjective "loner" in SL into the verb " تنهاش میزاری(i.e., you leave him alone) in TL. However, in the present study, some strategies, including calque, compensation, substitution, and variation, were not utilized by the two Iranian subtitlers for translating dark jokes in *Joker's* (2019) movie.

The Chi-Square test was performed to assess the statistically significant difference between the strategies adopted by translators for subtitling dark jokes in *Joker's* (2019) based on Molina and Albir's (2002) model (Table 3).

The obtained results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the strategies employed in Persian subtitles by Iranian translators for subtitling dark jokes ($x^2 = 20.32$, $p < .05$). Hence, it seems that Iranian translators employed different strategies in the subtitling of dark jokes.

4. Discussion

The findings declared that the literal translation and linguistic amplification strategies were the most used strategies in subtitling the dark jokes of two subtitled versions of the movie based on Molina and Albir's (2002) model. The literal translation strategy was the first common strategy in subtitling dark jokes. Using the literal translation strategy displayed, the subtitlers could find equivalence for half of the words in the ST with a word-for-word procedure. In the same vein, Sadeghpour and Omar (2015) reported literal translation as the most commonly used technique in subtitling jokes in comedy movies from Persian to English. Besides, Khodabandeh (2019), in her study, found that literal translation was the dominant strategy for translating humor in dubbed Persian animated series entitled "*Boss Baby*". The results also revealed that the linguistic amplification strategy was the second most frequent strategy in subtitling dark jokes. The explanation for the result is that the translators have transferred an expression with a different number of words in TT. Similarly, Ghassemiazghandi and Tengku-Sepora (2020) have concluded that the most common strategy applied by translators in the subtitling animation comedies from English into Persian is the paraphrase strategy based on Schmitz's model, which has a similar definition to the linguistic amplification strategy. Additionally, a large number of the modulation strategies in two subtitles indicated that the translator attempted to distance ST's point of view from TT's. It seems that translators in subtitling endeavored to establish a similar effect from the source text into the target text. Thus, they attempted to transfer the source text dialogue in some sentences by changing the ST point of view. Moreover, the Chi-Square Test results have shown a statistically significant difference between the strategies used by Iranian translators in the subtitled versions of the dark jokes in *Joker's* (2019) movie. It revealed that Iranian translators had different strategies for subtitling dark jokes from English into Persian.

5. Conclusion

It is concluded that Iranian translators used different strategies when subtitling dark jokes. Nevertheless, the results showed that among eighteen strategies proposed by Molina and Albir's (2002) model, literal translation and linguistic amplification strategies have been used most frequently in Persian subtitles of English dark jokes in two subtitled versions of *Joker* (2019) movie. The findings revealed that literal translation was the most used strategy in subtitling dark jokes in both subtitles. It seems that Iranian subtitlers could find equivalence for the words in the ST with the word-for-word procedure in subtitling the dark jokes. Additionally, the linguistic amplification strategy number demonstrated that the translators added linguistic elements and details in TT that were not formulated in the ST because English and Persian languages had different linguistic and semantic systems.

The findings have pedagogical implications for translation students, subtitlers, and fansubbers to become familiar with translation strategies to subtitle dark jokes. In addition, the samples proposed in this research can be useful for teaching translation strategies for subtitling dark jokes. Additionally, the researcher expects that the present research results be useful to translation instructors to become familiar with the strategies adopted in the translations of dark jokes and teach them to their translation students.

Declarations

Competing interests

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